

A
S E R M O N
A G A I N S T
S C H I S M E :

O R,
The S E P E R A T I O N S of these T I M E S.

Preacht in the Church of *Wattlington* in
Oxford-shire, with some Interruption,
September 11. 1652.

At a publick dispute held there,
Between J A S P E R M A Y N E, D.D.
And one _____

M A T. 13. 47.

Ὁμοία ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ ἑλενοῦ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς θαλάσσης, καὶ ἐν
παντὶ γένει συναγαγόν.

L O N D O N,

Printed for R. R O Y S T O N, at the Angel
in Ivie-lane, 1652.



И Ф М Я С

ТЭИ АЭА

repute in the Church of Washington in

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As a public dispute held there,

Between 1828 & 1834 D.D.

and b) A

THE FIFTH

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ՄԱՐԶԻ ԱԴԱՄՔԱՆԱԾՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՎԵՐԱԳԵՂՈՒՄԸ

W O D O L

Printed for R. R. Oyston, at the Angel
in Liveland, 1852.

THE
P R E F A C E.



If you please to turne to the 19. *Chapter* of the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, and to read from the 24. to the 33. *verse* of that *Chapter*, there is there mention made of a great Assembly, and concourse of *people*; Who upon the Instigation of one *Demetrius*, a *Silver-Smith*, were confusedly drawne together into a *publick Theater*. And when they were met there, the *Confusion* was so great, that the *Theater* for the time, was quite changed into a *Rabel*; there was a perfect Division of *speech*, and *Tongues* among them, scarce any two spoke the same *Language*; For some cryed out one Thing, and some cryed out Another, as you may read at the 32. v. of that Chap. Rudenesse, Clamour, Tumult, Noyse, was all that issued from them. Nay 'twas a *Meeting* so confused, so wholly void of Reason, that the greatest part knew not why they were come together, as you may read in the end, and close of that verse. And hence 'tis, that when *Saint Paul* would have engaged himselfe among them, and would have preacht to them to *convert* and turne them from their Error, 'Tis said at the 31. verse of that Chapter, That some of the *chief* of *Asia*, who were his *Friends*, sent to him, and desired him, that he would not adventure himselfe among such a rude, Tempestuous rout of *people*.

And now, if you desire to know why I have sayd this to you,

'tis to let you see, First, That this hath partly been my case; I have been sent, nay spoken to, by some *persons* of *Quality* and *Honour*, not to ingage my selfe among such a mixt *Multitude* as this; where my *Affronts* may be great, but my *successes*, and *Harvest* small: And to speak truth to you, if I had been left to the peaceableness of my owne quiet Temper, (which never did delight in *stormes*, nor to dispute with *Fire*.) If the fierce, and eager Importunity of *some* who have provokt me, had not drawn me from my *Judgement*, I should have followed their *Advice*, this *Meeting* had not beene. Nay, I should have lookt upon my *Appearance* here, as a *Distemper*, like to *theirs*, who have provokt and called me hither. For my coole and wiser Thoughts have still suggested to me, that to dispute of *Truth* with those who doe not understand it, is such a piece of *Madnesse*, as if I should dispute of *Colours* with a *Blind man*, of *Musicke* with a *Deafe*, or of the *Sent* of *Flowers* with *One* borne without a *Smell*.

Next, therefore, having so farre departed from my *Reason*, as to submit to a *Dispute* in this great publick *Meeting*, lest it should prove such a *confused Meeting*, as I described to you before; A *Meeting* where my *Logick* must fight *Duels* with Men made of *Rudenesse*, *Tumult*, *Noyse*; Or lest it should prove a *Meeting* where Men who can speak nought but *English*, shall yet speak *divers Tongues*; And where *some* shall cry out one *Thing*, and *some* shall cry another, I have made it my humble suit to some *persons* of *Honour* here present, that by their *presence* they will free the place from all such *wild Confusions*. And that, if I must dispute, I may dispute with *civill men*, and not undergoe *Saint Paul's* misfortune, who fought with *Beasts* at *Ephesus*.

Thirdly, lest this *Meeting* should prove like the *confused Meeting*, which I mention'd to you before, in one particular more; That is, lest the greatest part of you should not know why you are this day come together. Before I enter upon a full pursuit, or handling of this *Text*, it will be needfull that I tell you the occasion of this *Meeting*, which that I may the better doe, I shall desire you to believe, that 'tis not a *Meeting* of my *projection* or *Contrivance*. I appeare not here to raise a *Faction*, or to draw a *party* after me, nor to adde to the *Rents* of the *Coun-*

try, which are too wide already. Nor am I come hither to revenge my selfe in the *Pulpit*, or to speake ill of those who have most lewdly railed at me. Let them wallow themselves, as much as they please, in their owne grosse filth, and mire; let them, if they please, be those raging *Waves* of the *Sea*, which Saint *Jude* Jude 13. speakes of, which are alwayes *forming out their owne shame*, when they have steapt their *Tongues* in *Gall*, and spewd forth all their *Venome*, They shall not make me change my *Opinion*; which is, that to cast dirt for dirt, or to returne *Ill-LANGUAGE* for *Ill-LANGUAGE*, is a course so unreasonable, as if two Men should fight a *Duell*, and chuse a *Dunghill* for their *weapon*. As therefore, I am not come hither to shew my selfe *Malitious*, so I am not come hither to gaine *Applause*, or *Reputation* by this *Meeting*. No thirst of *Fame*, no affection of *Victorie* hath drawne me from my *Study* to steppe into this *Pulpit*. I understand my owne *Infirmities* too well to be so selfe-conceited. Or if my *Abilities* were farre greater then they are, yet I have alwayes lookt on *Fame* thus got, to be so slight a Thing, as if a Man should feed on *Ayre*, or make a meale of *Shaddows*.

Not to hold you therefore any longer in suspense, if you, who know it not already, desire to know the true occasion of this *Meeting*, 'tis briefly this; I have for some yeares (even with *Teares* in my eyes) seen one of the saddest curses of the *Scripture* fulfill'd upon this *Nation*: With a *bleeding Heart* I speake it, I have seene, not onely three *Kingdoms*, but our *Cities*, *Towns*, and *Villages*, nay even our *private Families* divided against themselves. I have seene the *Father* differing in opinion from the *Sonne*, and I have seene the *Sonne* differing in opinion from the *Father*. I have seene the *Mother* broken from the *Daughter*, and I have seen the *Daughter* divided from the *Mother*. Nay, our very *Marriage-Beds* have not scapt the curse of *Separation*. Like *Jacob* and *Esau* issuing from the same *wombe*, I have seene two *Twins* of *Separation* rise from between the same *Curtains*. I have seen the *Wedlock knot* quite untied in *Religion*; I have seene the *Husband* in opposition to the *Wife*, goe to one, and I have seene the *Wife* in opposition to her *Husband*, for many years together, goe to another *Congregation*. In a Word (my Brethren,) the *Church* of *Christ* among us, which was once as

Seamlesse as his Coate, is now so rent by *Schismes*, so torne by *Separations*, that 'tis become like the *Coate of Joseph* which you reade of in the 37. Chapter of *Genesis*, at the 3. verse, scarce one piece is colourd like another; And I pray God it prove not like the *Coat of Joseph* in one particular more; I pray God the *Weaker* be not sold by his *Brethren*, and his *Coate* be not once more dyed red, once more imbrued in *Bloud*. This, you will say, is very sad, and yet this is not all; That which extremely adds to the *Misery* of our *Rents*, and *Separations*, is, that the *Wise* cannot hope they will ere be peeced, or reconciled. For the persons who thus *Separate*, are so far from beleiving themselves to be in an *Error*, that they strongly thinke all *Others* erre who *separate* not too; They thinke themselves bound in *Conscience* to doe as they doe. Nay, zealous Arguments are urged, and Texts of *Scripture* quoted, to prove that 'tis a damning sinne not to goe on in *Separation*. The *Churches* where their *Neighbours* met are now contemned, and Scorned: Nay, I have with mine owne Ears heard a *Dining Room*, a *Chamber*, a *Meeting* under *Trees*; Nay, I have heard a *Hog-ſtye*, a *Barn*, called places more sanctified then they. In a word, one of the great Reasons which they urge, why they thus forsake our *Churches*, and make divided *Congregations*, is, because (They say) the people which assemble there are so wicked, so prophane, that they turne *Gods House* of prayer into a *den of Thieves*. To keep this infection from spreading in my *Parish*, and to keepe this piece of *Leaven* from sowing the whole *Lumpe*; And withall to satisfie one, whom I looke upon as a well-meaning, though a seduced, and erring person, who hath ingaged her selfe by promise, that if I can take the mist from her *Eyes*, and cleerly let her see her *Error*, she will returne back to the *Church*, from which she hath for some yeares gone astray; and being invited to doe this in a way of *Christian challenge*, which hath raised a great expectation in the *Countrey*, I have taken up the *Gauntlet*, and here present my selfe before you; and before I enter the *Lists*, to let you all see the Justice of the Cause which I here stand to defend, I have chosen this Text for my shield; where *He*, who wrote this *Epistle* to the *Hebrews* sayes, Let us consider one another to provoke one another to love, and to Good Works, not forsaking the Assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is.

The Division.

IN which words, the only poynt which I shall insist upon, as the fittest, and most seasonable to be preached to this divided Congregation, shall be the point of *Schisme*; or, in plaine English, *Separation*, as 'tis exprest to us in these Words, *Let us not forsake the Assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is.* In the pursuit and handling of which words, I will proceed by these two plaine and easie steps. First, I will prove to you, by Arguments, which have a *sun-beame* for their parent, That the *Rent* or *Separation* which is now made in the Church, is a very grievous sinne: Indeed, a sinne so grievous, that I scarce know whether *Christians* can be guilty of a greater. Next, I will Examine and answer their Arguments, and Texts of Scripture; who doe perswade themselves and others that their separation is no sinne; Nay, that would be a grievous sinne not to separate as they doe. In the meane time I beseech you to lend me a quiet and favourable Attention, whilest I begin with the first of these parts, and that shall be to prove to you, that the Separations of our Times, are great and grievous sinnes.

Among the other Characters and Descriptions which have been made of us Men, we have been called, *Σῶν ἑυμνλον*. That is, a Creature borne and made, and created for Society. Towards the preservation and maintenance whereof God at the Beginning, ordered his Creation of us so, that whereas other Creatures take their Originall and Birth from a Diversitie of parents, He made us Men to spring from one, undivided, single payre. One Adam, and one Eve were the two joyn'd parents of Mankind. And the Reason of this was, That there might not onely be among us one common Kinned and Alliance, but that we might hold a firme, and constant League and Friendship with each other too. And hence 'tis we see, that without any other Teacher but their owne Naturall Instinct, Men in all Ages have avoided separation, by gathering themselves into formed Bodyes of Cities, Towns and Commonwealths. Neighbourhood, Society, mutuall help, and Conversation, being one of the great Ends for which God made us Men. And upon this Ground it hath been disputed, whether

whether a *Hermit*, or *Monastic man*, breake not the *Law of Nature*, because he *separates* himselfe from the company of *Men*? And 'tis clearly stated by some great *Casuits*, That if he *separate* from others for no End but *separation*, if he retire himselfe into a *Cave* or *Wildernesse*, or *Desart*, (as some of the *Ancient Hermits* did) not for *Devotion*, but out of a hatred, or distaste of the rest of *Mankind*; In that particular he cannot well be called a *Man*, but some *wilder Creature*, made to dwell in *Caves*, *Desarts*, *Forrests*, *Dens*.

As then, the *Law of Nature* doth require us to preserve *society* and *Friendship*, so the *Law of Christ* hath tyed, and woven this knot much faster. We are all of *Kinne* by *Nature*, but we are all *Brethren* as *Christians*: Men allyed to one another by one common *Hope*, one common *Faith*, one common *Saviour*, one common *God*, and *Lord*, and *Father* of us all. And upon this Ground, when one *Christian* shall divide or forsake the *society* of Another, unlesse it be upon a just principle of *Conscience*, and to avoid a sinne, the *Scripture* calls it not barely *Separation*, but *Separation* which is *Schisme*. That is, such a *Separation* as is a *Gospel-sinne* too.

Which, that you may the more clearly understand, give me leave to aske you in truth what is *Schisme*? Why the best Definition of it that was ever yet given is this, That *Schisme* is nothing else, but a *separation* of *Christians* from that part of the *Visible Church*, of which they were once *Members*, upon meere fancied, slight, unnecessary Grounds. In which Definition of *Schisme*, three things doe offer themselves to your serious observation, to make it formall *Schisme*, or a *signe of Separation*. First it must be a *separation* of *Christians* from some part of the *Visible Church*, of which they were once *Members*; That is, (according to the Definition, a *visible Church* as it concerns this present purpose) it must be a Deniall of *Communion* with that *Congregation* of *Christians*, with whom they were once united under a rightly-constituted *Pastor*. Next, they who thus *separate*, must betake themselves to some other *Teacher*, whom, in opposition to the former, they chuse to be their *Guide*, and so make themselves his *Followers*.

Thirdly, they must erect a *New Assembly*, or place of *Congregation*, as a *New Church* distinct from that from which they doe divide.

Lastly,

Lastly, This choyce of a *New Guide*, and *Separation* from the *Old*, this *Erection* of a *New Church*, and *Division* from the former must be upon slight unnecessary *Grounds*; For if the *Cause*, or *Ground* of their *Separation* be needlesse, vaine, unnecessary, if it spring more out of *Humour*; *Pride*, desire of *change*, or *Hatred* of their *Brethren*, then out of any *Christian love* to keepe themselves from *finnes*; 'Tis in the *Scripture-Language* *Schisme*, That is, a *finne* of *Separation*.

Or if you will heare me expresse my self in the language of a very learned *Man* (who hath contrived a *clue* to lead us through this *Labyrinth*) This breach of *Communion*, This *Separation* from a *Church* rightly constituted; This choyce of a *New Guide*, *New Teacher*, *New Instructor*. Lastly, This setting up of a *New Congregation*, or place of *private Meetings*, is the same *finne* in *Religion*, which *Sedition*, or *Rebellion* is in the *Commonwealth* or *State*. For upon a right examination of the matter 'twill be found, That *Schisme* is a *Religious*, or *Ecclesiasticall Sedition*, as *Sedition* in the *State* is a *civill*, *Lay-schisme*.

Which two *finnes*, though they appeare to the *World* in diverse *shapes*, the one with a *Sword*, the other with a *Bible* in his *Hand*; yet they both agree in this, that they both disturb the *publick peace*. The one of the *State*, where men are tyed by *Laws* as *Men*; The other of the *Church*, where men should be tyed by *Love* as *Christians*.

To let you yet farther see, what a grievous *finne* this *finne* of *Schisme* or *Separation* is; If the time would give me leave, I might here rayse the *Schoolmen*, *Antient Fathers*, and *Generall Conncells* from the dead, and make them preach to you from this *Pulpit* against the *finne* of *Separation*. I might tell you, that in the purest *Times* of the *Church*, a *Schismatick*, and *Hereticke* were lookt upon as *Twinnnes*; The one as an *Enemy* to the *Faith*, the other to *Communion*. But because in our *darke Times*, *learning* is so grown out of date, that to quote an *Ancient Father*, is thought a piece of *Superstition*; And to cite a *Generall Conncell* is to speake words to our *New Gifted men* unknowne, I will say nothing of this *finne*, but what the *Scripture* sayes before me.

First, then, I shall desire you to heare what *S. Paul* sayes in
 B this

this *case*, in the last Chapter of his *Epistle* to the *Romans* at the 17. verse. Turne to the place, and marke it well I beseech you. Now I beseech you, brethren, sayes he there, *Marke them which cause Divisions, and offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them*: That is, in other words, *Separate yourselves from them*. And then he gives you a *Character*, and *Description* of those *Separators* at the 18. verse of that Chapter; And sayes, *For they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their owne Belly. And by good words and faire Speeches deceive the Hearts of the simple.*

In which words, *Four* things are so exactly drawn to life, as makes them a perfect *Prophecy*, or rather *picture* of our *Times*. The first is, that there were some in *S. Pauls* dayes, who caused *Divisions* in the *Church*; *Men*, who in a way of *Schisme*, and *Separation*, made themselves the *Heads* and *Leaders* of divided *Congregations*.

Next, The *Ground* upon which they built their *Separation*; 'twas not upon any just, true, lawfull, *Scripture-Ground*. For the Text sayes, *'Twas contrary to the Doctrine which the Apostles taught, and preached*. But the true cause, or *Ground*, why they thus caused *Separations*, was merely *self-Interest*; And that they might *gain* by their *Divisions*. Nay, 'twas such a poore, base, unworthy *self-Interest*, that 'tis there said, they did it in compliance to their *Belly*.

The third thing which will deserve your *observation*, is, the *cunning Art* they used to draw the *weake* to be their *Followers*. 'Tis there sayd, that by *good Words* and *faire Speeches*, they deceived the *Hearts of the simple*, especially the *simple* of the *weaker sex*. And who these were, *S. Paul*, in other words, but to the same purpose tells you, in the 3. Chapter of his second *Epistle* to *Timothy* at the 5, 6, 7. verses of that Chapter. Where speaking of such *Coseners*, he sayes, they had a *Forme of Godlinesse*, an outward seeming *Holynesse* to deceive and cosen by; And that under this *Forme of Godlinesse* they crept into *Houses*, and there led *Captive silly Women*, loaden with *sinnes*, and drawne away with divers *Lusts*. Women so unable to distinguish *Right* from *Wrong*, that they were alwayes learning, and never able to come to the *Knowledge of the Truth*.

And

And certainly, my Brethren, 'tis no new thing under the *sunne*, to see the *weaker sex* misled by *holy Formes*, and *Shews*. 'Tis no new thing, I say, under the *Sunne*, for a man that makes *long prayers*, to eat up a *Widdows House*; Or for a *cunning Angler* to catch the *filthy sort*, with a *hooke bayted with Religion*. 'Twas so in our *Saviours* time, and 'twas so in *S. Pauls*. And whether their demure lookes, their precise carriage, their long prayers, their good words and sayre speeches, be not the *Hooke*, and snare, by which *weake people* are caught now; whether the feasting of, their *Bellies*, or the making *Gayne* of *Godlinesse*; Or whether the *Itch* and *pride* of being the *Leaders* of a *Faction*; Or whether the vaine *Ambition* of being thought more *holy* or more *gifted* than the rest, be not the true end of those, who doe now cause *Separations*, I will not rashly censure, but I have some reason to suspect. But this is not all.

The fourth, and last thing, which most deserves your *observation*, is, that *Separation* in that place is such a *Scripture-finne*, that *S. Paul* commands us to *separate* from those, who doe thus cause *Separations*. Heare the place, I pray, once more repeated to you, I beseech you, *Brethren*, sayes he, *Marke them who cause Divisions among you, and avoid them*. That is, as I said before, *Separate your selves from them*. If they, who upon no just cause doe *Separate*, must be *Separated* from, I hope you'll all confesse that *Separation* is a *finne*.

And what *finne* thinke you is this *finne* of *Separation*? Why, I know some of you will thinke it strange if I should say, 'tis a *finne* of the *Flesh*. And yet *S. Paul* sayes, that 'tis a *finne* of the *Flesh*, in the 3. Chapter of his first *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*. Marke I beseech you what he sayes in that place. *Are ye not carnall?* sayes he there. For *whereas* there are among you *Envyings*, and *Strifes*, and *Divisions*; *Are ye not carnall*, and *walk as men*? Sayes He at the 3. verse. Again, *when one saith, I am Paul*; And *when another saith, I am of Apollos*; *Are ye not carnall?* sayes he at the 4. v. of that Chapter. If to divide and *separate* from the *Followers* of *S. Paul*, and to make themselves the *Followers*, and *Disciples* of *Apollos*; or if by way of *Separation* to make themselves the *markers* of severall *Churches*, to which *Apostles* were the *Guides*, were a *finne* of *Carnality*;

(as *S. Paul* sayes it was) what shall we say of some people of our *Times*? who instead of severall *Apostles* to divide themselves by, doe chuse to themselves *Guides* so means, so unlearned, so liable to *Error*, that they perfectly make between them the picture of *Mistakes*: The *Blinde* leading the *Blinde*, and both fallen into a *Ditch*? 'Tis not now, as 'twas then. When some said, *We are of Paul*, and when others said, *We are of Cephas*, and when others said, *we are of Apollos*; Others, *We are of Christ*. Though to make the Names of *Christ*, or *Paul*, or *Cephas*, names of *Faction*, was a sinne. But we are faine on *Times* so made of *Separation*, that people doe divide themselves by *Teachers*, whose second *Trade* is *Teaching*. *Teachers* so obscure, so bred to *small Occupations*; *Teachers* so sprung up from the basest of the people. Lastly, *Teachers*, so accustomed to the *Tremell*, *Forge*, and *Anvill*, that I almost blush to name them in the *Pulpit*. 'Tis not now said, *We are of Paul*, And we are of *Apollos*; But we are of *Wat Tyler*; We are of *Jacke Cade*; We are of *Alexander the Coporsmith*; We are of *Tom the Mason*; and we are of *Dicke the Gelder*. And whether to *Divide* and *Separate* under such vulgar Names as *These*, be no a sinne of the *Flesh*, I leave to every one of you, who have read *S. Paul*, to judge.

And here, now, if *Time* were not a *Winged Thing*, or if it would but stay my leisure, I might lay before you many other places of the *Scripture*, which clearly doe demonstrate that *Separation* is a sinne. For though, like the *Ghost of Samuel*, which you read of in the *Scripture*, it usually appeare cloathed in the *Mantle* of a *Prophet*, though it were *Holiness* in the *Tongue*, And *precisenesse* in the *Face*; yet to let you see what an *Apple of Sodome* it is; How it lookes with a *Virgin* cheek without, and is nought but *Rottenesse* within, I shall once more desire you to heare what *S. Paul* sayes of it, In the 5. Chapter of the *Galatians* at the 19. and 20. verses of that chapter, Where he once more reckons it among the *sinnes* of the *Flesh*. As for Example, *The Works of the Flesh* are manifest, sayes he, which are these. *Adulterie*, *Fornication*, *Uncleannesse*, *Lasciviousnesse*, *Idolatry*, *Witchcraft*, *Hatred*, *Variance*, *Emulation*, *Wrath*, *Strife*, *Seditions*, *Heresies*, sayes our English Translation. But the words in the *Originall Greek*, (which are the true Word of God) will beare it thus.

thus. *Διχομασίαι*, 'Aisōns, That is, Divisions, Sells, Envyings, Murthers, Drunkenness, Ravellings, and such like. Of the which I tell you before, sayes he, As I have told you in Times past, Th. 2 They which doe such Things shall not Inherit the Kingdome of God. Where you see Seditions, Sells, and Schismes, as well as Adulterie, and Murther, are there listed by S. Paul among those works of the Flesh, which doe shut men out of Heaven, and exclude them from Salvation.

Many such like places of the Scripture I might lay before you. But I will content my selfe with one Argument more; which shall not onely prove to you, That Separation is a sinne; But one of the Greatest sinnes, of which Christians can be guilty.

To make this cleare to you, and beyond all Dispute, or Question. That which I will say to you (and mark it well) is this. 'Tis a Rule in Divinity, (and tis a Rule infallible) That those sinnes are the Greatest, which are most contrary, and doe most oppose the greatest Christian vertues. Now the Three Great Christian vertues which doe make and constitute a Christian, are set downe by S. Paul, in the 13. chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, at the last verse, where he sayes, Now abideth Faith, Hope, and Charity; But the Greatest of these is Charity. Thus, then, stands the case. Distrust in Gods promises, or an unbelieve in his power, is a very great sinne. For 'tis a sinne which doth oppose and quite cut off the wings of Hope. Heresie, or the strife, and obstinate Defence, and persisting in a knowne Error, is a farre greater sinne. For 'tis a sinne against Faith, a sinne which strives to draw a Cloud about the Beames of Truth. But if it be true what S. Paul sayes, (as most certainly it is) If it be true that Charity is greater then either Faith, or Hope. Then 'twill follow by Good Logick, and all the Consequence of Reason; That that sinne which doth unitie, and break the Bond of peace; That sinne which destroyes Christian Friendship, and Communion; Lastly, That sinne which rends, and teares the Cords of Charity asunder, is a farre greater sinne then unbelieve or Heresie. And the sin which doth all this is the sin of Separation.

First 'tis a greater sinne in it selfe, and the very formality of the sinne. As being the worst Extreme to the best, and greatest vertue. Namely, The vertue of Love; By which Christ would have his

Followers distinguisht from the rest of *Mankind*. For by this shall all men know, sayes he, that you are my *Disciples*, if yee love one another. As you may read in the 13. chapter of *John* at the 35. verse. And agreeable to this is that which is deliverd here in this Text, where the *Author* of this *Epistle* to the *Hebrewes* sayes, Let us consider one another to provoke one another to Love. And not forsake the *Assembling* of our selves together, as the manner of some is.

And as *Schisme*, or *Separation* upon a slight, or needlesse Ground is in it selfe one of the greatest sinnes; So tis one of the greatest sinnes too, in its dangerous *Effects*. Besides the *Hatred*, *Envy*, *Strife*, which it begets among Men of divided *Interests*, and *Mindes*, Tis many times the *Coale* which sets whole *States* and *Common-wealths* on fire. It pretends, indeed, very much to the *Spirit*, And at first cloaths it selfe in the *Dresse* of *Humility* and *Meeknesse*; But they who have written the *Chronicles* of the Church can tell you, That those pretences to the *Spirit* have no sooner gathered strength, but they have proceeded to bloody *Battells*, and *pitcht fields*. Where the *Mecke* persons have throwne aside their *Bibles*; and have changed the *Sword* of the *Spirit* into the *Sword* of *Warre*. The proceedings of the *Donatists* in *Affricke*, and of the *John*-of *Leyden*-Men at *Munster* are two sad *Examples* of the truth of what I say.

The Grounds of Separation examined.

2.

BUT here, perhaps, will some of you, who heare me this day, say, What's all this to us? In saying this which you have hitherto said, like those who wrote *Romances*, you have but created an *Adversary* out of your own fancy, and then foyld him; or like the man in *Aristotle* who drove his shadow before him, you first frame a man of *Ayre*, and then cry he flies from you. But if this be to conquer, one of our *Gifted Men* who is at all no *Scholler*, can as well triumph over men of *Ayre*, and shadowes, as your selfe. To let you see, therefore, that I am one of those, who desire not to fight *Duels* with *naked unarmed Men*; nor to meet any in the *Field*, before we have agreed upon the just

just length of our *Weapons*: If your *patience* will hold out so long, who come *disinterested* hither, This second part of this *Sermon* shall be spent in the pursuit of that, which Master *Deane* of *Christ-church* just now very *seasonably* noted as a *Defect* in our present way of *Arguing*, and *Dispute*, which was, that the *Grounds* were not examined upon which the *present Separations* of these Times, do build themselves. These *Grounds*, therefore, I shall now in the next place call to some *reckoning* and *Account*, And in the doing of this, I will hang up a payre of *Scales* before you, you shall see their *Arguments* placed in *One Scale*, and my *Answers* in the *Other*: And because no *Moderatour* sits in the *Chayre* to judge (which was a thing foreseen by me, but could not well be compass) I shall make you the *Judges* who heare me this day. And because the *Rudenesse*, and *Ill-language* of those who have disturbed me in this *Pulpit*, hath made me stand before you here like a man arraigned for *Errour*, I will freely cast my selfe upon *God*, and you the *Country*. Thus, then, I shall proceede.

Here (as I said before) may some of the *Separating party*, say to me, How doth the former part of your *Sermon* concern us? We *separate*, 'tis true, But not on those *false Grounds* which you have all this while described. We grant, indeed, That if we broke *Communion* with you out of *Faction*, or *Selfe-Interest*, or *Pride*, or desire of *Gain*, or meere *Love* of *Separation*, you might well call us *Schismatics*; and we should well deserve that *Name*. But the *Ground* on which we *separate* from you, is, because you are not fit to be *Assembled* with, you are *sinners*; wicked, lewd, profane, notorious *sinners*. The *places* where you meet breathe nothing but *Infection*. Your *Teachers* preach *false Doctrine*; and your people practise *Lies*. In a word, we cannot with the safety of our *Conscience* frequent your *Congregations*. Since to appeare there would be an enterprize as dangerous, as if we should make *Visits* to a *Pest-house*, and there hope to scape the *Plague*.

This you will say (good people) is very hard language. And How, thinke you, do they prove it? why, as they thinke by two cleare places of the *Scripture*, which no man can *oppose*, and not make *Warre* with *Heaven*. Two places of *Scripture*, I say, have
been

beene produced, and quoted to me, like *Sampson* and *Achilles*, with *Invincible Lances* in their Hands. Places which doe not onely allow, but command a separation; Nay, they command it so fully, that if they should not separate, or forsake our Congregations, they say they should sinne greatly, and disobey the Scripture. And what are these two places?

The first you shall finde set downe in the 5. last verses of the 6. Chapter, of the second Epistle of *S. Paul* to the *Corinthians*, where the words run thus. *Be ye not unequally yoke together with unbelievers. For what Fellowship hath Righteousnesse With unrighteousnesse? And what Communion hath Light with Darknesse? And what Concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an Infidell? And What agreement hath the Temple of God With Idolls? For ye are the Temple of the living God; * As God hath said, I Will dwell in them, and walke in them; And I Will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separte, * saith the Lord, and touch not the uncleane thing, and I will receive you. This is their first great place, which they urge for separation. Will you now heare their second? That you shall finde set downe in the 4. first verses of the 18. Chapter of the Revelations. Where the words run thus, *After these things, sayes S. John there, I saw another Angel come downe from Heaven, having great power; and the Earth was lightned with his Glory. And he cryed mightily, With a strong voice, saying, Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the Habitation of Devils, and the hold of every foule Spirit; And the Cage of every unclean, and hatefull Bird. For all Nations have drunke of the wine of the wrath of her Fornications; And the Kings of the Earth have committed Fornication with her. And the Merchants of the Earth are waxed rich, through the Abundance of her Delicacies. And I heard Another voyce from heaven, (sayes he) saying; Come out of her my people, that yee be not partakers of her sinnes, and that yee receive not of her plagues.**

These two places of Scripture (if you will heare me expresse my selfe in the shred-bare Language of the Times) They say, doe hold Forth themselves soe clearely, that I may sooner quench the sunne than finde an Answer to them. Nay, to deale freely with you, these two places, and these only are a piece of the Challenge which

* Levit. 26. 12.

* Esay 52. 11.

which hath occasioned this *Dispute*. For I am promised by *Her*, whom I here come to *undeceive*, that if I can answer these two places, she will be my *Convert*; And will separate from these who doe now make separations.

I take her at her word, and doe thus contrive, and shape my *Answers*; Marke them I beseech you. As for the first place in the 6. Chapter of the second *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*; you are to understand, that when S. Paul wrote that *Epistle*, The City of *Corinth* was not wholly converted to the *Faith*, but was divided in *Religions*, some were yet *Heathens*, and sacrificed to *Idols*: Others did imbrace the *Gospell*, and gave up their Names to *Christ*.

N-verthelesse, they were not so divided in *Religions*, but that dwelling together in the same *City*, certaine Neighbourly *Civillities*, and Acts of *kindnesse* past between them. As for Example, when a *Heathen* or *Unbeliever* offered a *sacrifice* to his *Idol*, 'twas usuall, for old Acquaintance sake, to invite his *Christian Friends* to be *Guests* to his *sacrifice*; And to eat of his *meate* which was offered to his *Idol*, As you may read, 1 *Cor.* 10. 27, 28. And the place where the *sacrifice* was eaten, and where the *Feast* was made, was, for the most part in the *Temple* of the *Idol*, As you may read, 1 *Cor.* 8. 10. Now, this mingling of *Religions*; This meeting of *Christians* with *Heathens*, at a *Heathen Feast*; Nay, at a *Feast* where the *Meat* was first offered to an *Idol*, Nay in that *Idol* was offered to the *Devils*, as you may reade, 1 *Cor.* 10. 20. Nay, this meeting of *Christians* with *Heathens* at an *Idol sacrifice*, and their eating with them of that *sacrifice* in the very *Temple* of the *Idol*, was a thing so dangerous, so apt to call *weake Christians* back againe to their former *Idolatry*, That *Saint Paul* thought it high time to say, *Be not thus unequally yoke with unbelievers*. In which expression he doth cast an eye upon that *Law of God*, which you may read set downe in the 22. Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, at the 9, 10, 11. verses of that Chapter. Where *God* sayes, *Thou shalt not sow thy Vineyard with diverse seeds*; Nor shalt thou plough thy field with an *Oxe*, and an *Asse* yoke together; Nor shalt thou weare a Garment of divers sorts, Name-ly, of *Linnen*, and *Woollen* woven together in one piece. To the *My- sicall* meaning of which *Law*, S. Paul here alludes, when he sayes, *Be not unequally yoke with Unbelievers*. For a *Christian*

mingling with a *Heathen*, in a *Heathen Congregation*: Nay, a *Christian* mingling with a *Heathen* in the *Temple* of an *Idol*, was a more disproportion'd sight, then to see an *Oxe* yoked with an *Ass* in the same *Plough*; Or then to see *Corn* sown with *Grapes* in the same *Field*; Or then to see *Wool* mixt with *Linnen* in the same *Garment*. In a Word, the *Idolatry* of the *Heathens* was so inconsistent with the *Religion* of the *Christians*, that *S. Paul* proceeds, and sayes, that they might as well reconcile *Light* to *Darknesse*, or contrive a *League* betweene *Christ* and *Belial*; Or tie a *Marriage knot* between *Righteousnesse* and *sinne*, as make it hold in *fitnesse*; That *Christians* who are the *Temples* of *God*, and of his holy *Spirit*, should meet, and eate, and beare a part in the *Idol Temples* of the *Heathens*. And these *Infidels*, these *Heathens*, who did not believe in *Christ*; These *Corinthians* unconverted, These *Worshippers* of *Idols*, who strived to draw the *Christians* back to their former *Superstitions*, were they from whom *S. Paul* bids his *New Converts* separate themselves. Come out from among them, and be ye separate, sayes he, at the 17. verse of that Chapter. Or, (in the Language of the place) Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. Which words are but a *String* struck by the

* *Esay* 52. 11. Prophet * *Esay* first, and spoken by him, of the separation of the *Jewes*, from the then *Idolatryes* of the *Heathens*. And that this is the true Interpretation of this place, will appeare to any who shall compare, what *S. Paul* here sayes, with that which he sayes, in the 10. Chapter of his first *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, from the 19. to the 30. verse of that Chapter.

This then, being so, Let me aske the zealous persons, who thus delight in *Separation*, are *They* from whom they separate such *Infidels*, such *Heathens*, such *Worshippers* of *Idols*, as *S. Paul* doth here describe? Doe they see any *Gods* of *Gold*, erected in our *Temples*? Or doe they see any *Images* of *Silver* adored, and sacrificed to by our *Congregations*? Doe any of us make *prayer*: to a *Stocke*? Or doe any of us burne *Incense* to a *Stone*? Nay, let them (if they please) examine us by their *private-meeting-Catechisms*. Doe we not confesse the same *God* that they doe? Doe we not beleeve in the same *Jesus Christ*? Do we preach another *Gospel*? Or hope to be saved by any other *Name* but His? Are not our *Congregations* built on the *Scripture-Rock*? Is not *Christ* our

our Corner Stone, and his Apostles our Foundation? Doe we not agree with them in all things, but where they differ from the Scripture? As for Example, we doe maintaine, and say, that separation is a sinne. They doe maintaine and say, That 'tis a Christian Duty; We urge that Text which sayes, *One Lord, One Faith, One Baptisme*; They urge no Text, which sayes, Men must be twice Baptised. We say, that if a Child of God doe breake Gods Laws, a Child of God sinnes. Some of them say that God beholds no sinne in his Children. Lastly, we say of the Scripture, as † S. Peter said of S. Pauls Epistles; *That there be some things in them, very hard to be understood, which they who are unlearned* † 2 Pet. 3. 16, *wrest to their owne Destruction.* They say unlearned Gifted Men are the best Exponnders of the Scripture; What they mean by Gifted Men I will not here examine. But that which I will say is this, because We differ in Opinions to divide themselves from us; Nay to apply such a reproachfull place of Scripture to us, as makes us no better then Infidels, and Heathens, and Worshippers of Idols, is to revile us with the Word of God, and to Libell us with Scripture.

Would They take it well, if we should apply to Them that place which sayes; *Woe to you, yee Hypocrites, yee Blind Leaders of the Blind*; you who strayne at Gnats, and yet securely swallow Camels? Would They take it well, if we should quote a place of Scripture, and make it call Them *Whited Sepulchers*; which shewe sayre and beautifull without, and hold nought but stinke, and Rottenesse within? Again, would They take it well if we should apply to them, that place which speaks of Men, who have a Forme of Godlinesse, but deny the power thereof? Men, who like the old Pharisees, with a long prayer in their Mouth, creep into Houses, and there leade Captive silly Women? Lastly, would They take it well if we should apply that place to Them, which sayes; *That as Jannes, and Jambres withstood Moses, so doe these men resist the Truth*? Men of corrupt Mindes; Reprobate concerning the Faith? (as 'tis in the Greek, and the Margin of your Bibles) *Ἀντιστοιπεῖν τῇ ἰσχύϊ τοῦ Θεοῦ*, Men purblind, void of Judgement concerning the true knowledge of the Faith? If they would not take it well, why they do not observe the Rule of Equity, and Justice, which is, *To doe to us, but as They would have us doe to them*?

† Col. 3. 5.

But here perhaps, will some of you who heare me this day, say; We doe not *separate* from you, because you are out-right *unbelievers, Pagans, Infidels, or Heathens*; But because you weare the Names of *Christians*, and yet live the Lives of *Heathens*. Though you doe not worship *Idols*, yet there is *Covetousnesse* among you, which S. Paul calls † *Idolatry*. And though you doe professe *Christ*, yet you walke *disorderly*; And doe commit those *finnes* which they who *denyed Christ* did. Though we see no *Gods of Gold* nor *Silver* in your *Temples*, yet if we came there, we might see a *Congregation* of such people as S. Paul in other places bids us *Separate* from. As for *Example*, turne to the 3. Chapter of his second *Epistle* to the *Thessalonians*, and the 6. verse. Doth he not there command us *In the name of the Lord Jesus to Withdraw our selves from every Brother, who walkes disorderly, and not according to the Traditions which he taught*? Or if this place be not cleare enough, turne to the 5. Chapter of the first *Epistle* of S. Paul to the *Corinthians*, and to the 11. verse, Doth he not there say, that if *Any man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicatour, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Rayler, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner*, with such a one we are not to keep *Company, No, not to eat*?

I grant, indeed, S. Paul sayes so, and doe think it very fit that S. Paul should be obeyed. But how doth this prove that they are to *forsake* our *Congregations*? That there are *such men* among us, as S. Paul doth there describe, is a *Truth* too cleare to be denied. But are our *whole Congregations* composed of such men? Are all *Drunkards*? Are all *Fornicatours*? Are all *Raylers*? Are all *Extortioners*? Are all, both *Priests* and *People* so like one another, that when they meete they make not a *Church-Assembly*, but a *Congregation* of such *sinners*? Or are they onely *some*? And they, perhaps, the *lesser part* who are guilty of those *finnes*? Nay suppose they should be farre the *greater part*, who are guilty of these *finnes*; yet you know our * *Saviour Christ* compares the *Church* to a *Field* sowne with *good seed*; But then he tells us too, That to the *Worlds end*, among the *good seed* there shall still grow *Weeds*, and *Tares*. Againe, in the 13. chapter of S. *Mathew* at the 47. and 48. verses of that *Chapter*, he compares the *Kingdome of God* here in this *World*, to a *Net cast into the Sea*, which inclosed *Fishes* of all

* Mat. 13.

sorts

sorts, Bad as well as Good. And what the meaning of this draught of mingled Fishes is, I shall desire you to read at the 49. and 50. verses of that chapter, where he sayes; That at the End of the World, and not till then, the Angels shall go forth, and shall separate the Wicked from among the Just: *ἐκ μέσσω τῶν δικαίων*, sayes the Originall Greek, They shall separate the wicked from the midst of the Just, which clearly doth prove to us, That till this finall Separation, in the Church of God here on earth, there will alwayes be a mixture: To divide or separate, therefore, from the whole Congregation, because some Wicked men are in it, is a course so unreasonable, as if they should refuse a Field of Corne because there grew some Weeds, or should renounce a Field of Wheat because it beares some Tares.

Besides, I would faine know, how farre they will extend the meaning of that Text, where S. Paul sayes, That they are not to eat with a Brother, who is a Drunkard, or Adulterer, or Rayler, or Extortioner. Will they extend it to all sorts of persons who are such? If they will, Then if a Woman have a Drunkard to her Husband, she must separate from him because he is a Drunkard, if she doe not, every time she eats with him, she disobeyes S. Paul; and in every meals she makes with him she commits a Scripture sinne. By the same reason also, If the Sonne have a Drunkard to his Father, he must remove Tables, and not dyet with his Father. And so there will be one Divison more then those the Scripture speakes of: For that onely tells us that the time shall come when the Sonne shall be divided from the Father, and the Mother from the Daughter. But if this Interpretation be true, the Wife must divide and break her selfe from her distemper'd Husband too.

Nay give me leave to goe one step farther yet. If the sinnes of a part be a just sufficient Ground to separate from the whole, Why doe not they who separate, divide and fall assur'd? For here let me ask them, and let me ask without offence; Are they all so Innocent, so pure, so free, so voyd of sinne, that there is not one disorderly Brother among them? Is their place of private Meetings so much the New Jerusalem, That no Drunkard, no Adulterer, nor Rayler enters there? I wish there did not, my Brethren. We Ministers should not then so oft be called Dumb Doggs, Idol shepheards, Limbs of Antichrist, Baals Priests, by

Jam. 3.6.

Tongues, which if S. James say true, are set on fire of Hell.
 If then, it be not the meaning of S. Paul in that place, that we should separate from all because some of those All are wicked, upon what other just Ground doe they break Communion with us? Is it because we preach in Churches? They are Gods House of prayer. Made his by the Piety, and Devotion of our Fathers, who if they lived now would hardly call them Saints, who preferre a Barne, nay a Hog-ske before a consecrated Temple. Or is it because there is Heresie or Superstition mixt with our once Common Forme of prayer? If there had been, you see that scandall is removed. Or doe we persecute, or force, or drive them from our Congregations? We are so farre from that, that you see, they are ready to require that our publick Congregations, should Stoope, and bow the Knee to their private Meetings. What other secret reason tis which thus divides them from us, I can by no means think, unlesse it be wrapt up in the Mystery and cloud of the 18. chap. of the Revelations, which is their other strong Heremlean place of Scripture, which hath been urged to me to make good their Separation. From which dark place of Scripture when I have removed the veyle and Curtaine, I will put a period, and conclusion to this Sermon.

Tis there said, that S. John heard an Angel proclaime aloud, and say, *Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen; and is become the Habitation of Devils, the Hold of every uncleane Spirit, and a Cage of every uncleane, and hatefull Bird; As you may read at the 2. verse of that chapter.* Tis farther said, That he heard another voice from heaven, saying, *Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sinnes, and that ye receive not of her plagues.* As you may read at the 4. verse of that chapter, where by Babylon fallen, they understand the Church of England fallen, By the Habitation of Devils, the Hold of foule Spirits, and Cage of uncleane Birds. They understand our Parish Churches, and Congregations which meet there; which, they say, are so much a Cage of uncleane Birds, places so corrupt, so full of wickednesse, and sinne, that God, by his Spirit, as it were, by a voice from the Clouds, hath said unto them, *Come out of them, my people, divide your selves from them, lest ye be partakers of their sinnes, and go sharers in their plagues.* This is, or must be their Interpretation of that place; or else 'twill no way serve to uphold their

their Separation. If, I say, by the *Habitation of Divells*, and *Cage of uncleane Birds* be not meant our Church *Assemblies*, from which they doe divide, they doe but build a *House of straw*, and choose the sand for a *Foundation*. I am sure I have been told that this was the very *Interpretation* which the *Gentleman* gave of this place, who just now disputed with me, at a dispute which not long since he had with Mr. Gibson of Chinner.

But now will you heare my *censure* of this wilde *Interpretation*? Take it then, thus. Among the severall *Expounders* of the *Revelation*, I once met with one, who when he came to interpret the *Seven Angels*, which blew the *Seven Trumpets*, He said that by one of those *Angels* was meant *Luther*, by another *Queen Elizabeth*. And when he came to give the meaning of the *Locusts* which ascended from the *Bosomelesse pit*, with *Crowns* on their Heads, by the *Locusts*, He understood *Schollers* of the *Universitie*; And by the *Crownes* on their Heads, He understood *Square Caps*. Methinkes, these kinde of people deale just so with this place of the *Revelation*. They see *strange visions* in it which *S. John* never saw; Namely, they see *Babylon* in our Churches, and *uncleane Birds* in our *Assemblies*. Nay, though the *Divells* being *Spirits* are too invisible to be seen, yet, by the benefit of a *New-light*, they can see sights which no other *Eyes* can see without being present in the place to which *soyl Spirits* do resort, (as if they had borrowed one of *Galileo's Glasses*) they can see *Divells* take *Notes* at our *Sermons*. But whether in *short-Hand*, or at length, *S. John* hath not revealed.

Pardon me, I beseech you, you who are of the more grave and nobler sort, that I am thus pleasant in the pulpit; I am compelled to be so when I meet with people who deale with the *Scripture*, as men of melancholly Fancies use to deale with the *Clouds*. For as I have knowne some *Hypocondriack* men, who have fained to themselves flying *Horses*, *Winged Troops*, and *Ships* sayling in the Aire; Nay, as I have knowne some, who, like the *Melancholly* man, who thought himselfe a *urinall*, have thought they have seene two *Armies* in the *Skie*; and have mistaken *Clouds*, and *Meteors* for *Soldiers*, *Trumpets*, *Drums*, and *Cannons*; So I do not wonder that our *Gifted*, thinking people should so mistake the *Revelation* as they doe; or that they should see *Monsters* in the *Scripture Clouds*. Where the *Scripture* is most cleare, they hardly un-

understand it ; How then, should they finde out the *Key* to such *da ke prophecies* as this ?

But here may some man say to me, if they *mistake* this place, whats your *Interpretation* of it ? Why, my *Interpretation* is the very same which *S. John* Himselfe delivers, *Rev. 14. 8.* Where the *Angel* expresseth himself in the very same words, And sayes, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen; That great City which made all Nations drinke of the Wine of the Wrath of her Abominations.* And what was that *Great City* ? Why the *City* built on *seven Hills* ; As 'tis described in another place of the *Revelation*. That *Great City* which was the *Queen of Nations* ; Namely, the *City of Rome*, when 'twas the *seat of Heathen Emperours*. Lastly, that *Great City*, which gave *Laws* to all the *World*, to worship her *False Gods*, and to partake of her *Idolatryes*. And this was that *Great City*, which *S. John* calls *Babylon*; either, because speaking of the *Fall* and *Ruine* of it, He thought it not safe to call it *Rome*, or by its right and proper *Name* ; Left, if he had done so, he might draw *persecution* on the *Christians*. Or els, Because as *Babylon* was the *Head City* of the *Persian Monarchy*, so *Rome* was then the *Head City* of the *Roman*. In a word, this is that *Great City*, which was then the great *Court of Idolatry*, the *Queen of Superstitions*; And therefore, justly called by the *Angel* which spoke to *S. John*, The *Habitation of Devils*, and *Cage of unclean Birds*. And from this *Babylon*, this *Rome*, the then *City of confusion*, the *Angel of God* bid the *Christians* of those *Times* to come forth, and separate themselves; lest they should be partakers of her *sins*, and go sharers in her *plagues*. But to say as they do, that the *Church of England* is that *Babylon the great*; or that our *Parish Congregations* from which they do divide themselves, are the *Habitation of Devils*, the *Hold of foule spirits*, and *Cage of unclean Birds* here mentioned in this *chap.* is such a piece of *Ignorance*, as well as *zealous slander*, that they will never be able to prove it, till they can make the *Capitol of Rome* stand in our *London streets*, or till they can make the *River Tiber* run, where now our *Thames* doth ; or till they can change the *Countries* in our *Mapps*, and make the *Mid-lanà Sea* flow on our *English shore*. And farther then this I will not trespass on your *patience*; or enlarge my selfe to prove to you that *Separation* is a *Sin*.



T H E E N D.

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